



Drug Use Among San Diego Arrestees

May 2010

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Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM)

- Funded by the National Institute of Justice since 1987
- Locally funded beginning in 2004
- Interviews with adults and juveniles booked into detention facilities
- Urinalysis identifies recent drug use
- Platform for other research

SAM Provides Valuable Information

- **One of ten indicators for the Meth Strike Force Report Card**
- **Demonstrates severity of problem in San Diego County**
- **Measures change over time and can be tied to other changes in the community**
- **Data shared through CJ Bulletins and CJ Faxes**



2008 Juvenile Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region

July 2009

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2008 Adult Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region

September 2009

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Methamphetamine Use by Adult and Juvenile Arrestees in 2008

December 2009

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Gang Involvement Among San Diego County Arrestees in 2008

October 2009

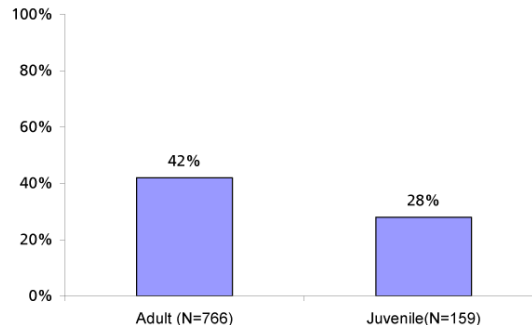
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TACKLING THE MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

A growing concern in recent years is the misuse of prescription drugs (e.g., painkillers, sedatives, and tranquilizers). The most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reports that in 2007, 6.9 million people (or 2.8% of the population) 12 years of age and older had taken prescription type drugs for non-medical purposes in the past year. The NSDUH also reveals it was most often a friend or family member who provided the medication¹.

Although arrestees are a higher risk population, soon to be released 2009 preliminary data from SANDAG's Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program reveal that more than two in five (42%) adult and over one-quarter (28%) of juvenile arrestees have abused a prescription type drug in their lifetime (Figure 1). When adult arrestees who reported receiving medication without a legitimate prescription were further asked how they obtained the drug, almost all (95%) said they received or purchased the medication from another person as opposed to using a fake prescription (3%), stealing from another person (2%), or stealing from a pharmacy (1%).

**Figure 1
TWO IN FIVE ADULT AND ONE IN FOUR JUVENILE ARRESTEES REPORT MISUSE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**



SOURCE: SANDAG; Substance Abuse Monitoring Program, 2009

These national and local data highlight the ease by which individuals acquire prescription drugs without a prescription, making accessibility a unique problem to prescription drug misuse. Locally, San Diego County has taken an active role in combating this problem. As part of their prevention efforts on April 17, 2010, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and the Oxycontin Task Force will hold their second "Prescription Drug Take Back Day" event. This event raises awareness of nonmedical prescription drug use, offers information on treatment, and provides a safe place to dispose of unused pharmaceuticals. At last year's event, over 300 pounds of unneeded prescription drugs were received for proper disposal. For more details about the event, please visit the Oxycontin Task Force Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Diego-CA/Oxy-Task-Force/101481557734>.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2008). **Results from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings**. On-line at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k7nsduh/2k7Results.pdf>

SAN DIEGO ARRESTEES LESS LIKELY TO USE MARIJUANA AND COCAINE, BUT MORE LIKELY TO USE METHAMPHETAMINE

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recently released its 2008 Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM II) program report on drug trends among a few select communities across the nation¹. ADAM II is a continuation of the original ADAM project, which was funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to collect and analyze drug use data among arrestees in 35 sites across the nation. NIJ terminated the program in 2003 and ONDCP revived a scaled-down version in 2006, concentrating on male arrestees and implementing data collection in ten sites throughout the nation. Although San Diego County is not one of the new ADAM II sites, through the generosity and foresight of local funders², it was the only ADAM site to maintain the project uninterrupted since 2003, renaming it the Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program and expanding the scope to include issues of local concern. Because SAM continues to implement the same rigorous data collection methodology as ADAM, results from San Diego can be compared to the ADAM II sites. This is one of the first opportunities since the termination of ADAM to examine San Diego in relation to other major metropolitan areas.

In comparison to the other ten sites, San Diego had the second lowest percentage of offenders testing positive for at least one drug (57%), with the low being 49 percent in Washington, D.C. and the high 87 percent in Chicago (Table 1). In terms of specific drugs, San Diego had the lowest or one of the lowest recent usage rates for cocaine and marijuana, and the percent positive for heroin was somewhere in the middle compared to other jurisdictions. Not surprisingly, although meth use has continued to spread across the country, usage remained the highest in western parts of the United States, with San Diego having the second highest rate, following Sacramento.

Table 1
MALE ARRESTEES IN SAN DIEGO DIFFER IN DRUG USAGE COMPARED TO ADAM II SITES

	Any Drug	Marijuana	Meth	Cocaine	Opiates
Atlanta, GA	60%	32%	.4	41%	2%
Charlotte, NC	69%	51%	.5%	30%	1%
Chicago, IL	87%	49%	.4%	44%	29%
Denver, CO	68%	42%	3%	33%	4%
Indianapolis, IN	64%	46%	2%	21%	5%
Minneapolis, MN	65%	48%	2%	23%	6%
New York, NY	69%	42%	.1%	30%	7%
Portland, OR	64%	41%	15%	21%	8%
Sacramento, CA	78%	47%	35%	17%	4%
Washington, D.C.	49%	31%	2%	27%	12%
San Diego, CA	57%	36%	20%	8%	7%

SOURCES: ONDCP ADAM II 2008 Annual Report; SANDAG SAM 2008 data

To learn more about SAM, visit SANDAG's Web site at www.sandag.org/cj.

¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy (2009). *ADAM II 2008 Annual Report*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

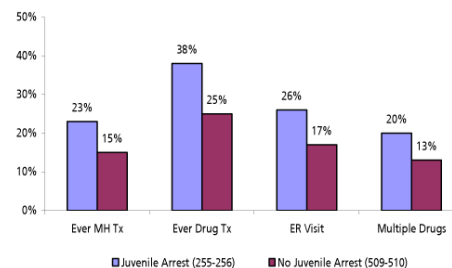
² SAM is currently funded by California Border Alliance Group (CBAG), County of San Diego Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS), the District Attorney's Office, and the Public Safety Group.

ONE IN THREE ADULT ARRESTEES ALSO ARRESTED AS A JUVENILE

Recent data from SANDAG's Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program illuminates the slippery slope between juvenile delinquency and future adult criminal behavior. Interviews with adults booked into local detention facilities show that 33 percent reported having ever been arrested as a juvenile (not shown). In addition, these arrestees had more serious histories of drug use, mental health issues, and criminal behavior than arrestees who did not have this juvenile justice system contact. As Figure 1 shows, individuals arrested as a juvenile were more likely to have ever received mental health and/or drug treatment, visited an emergency room because of their drug use, and tested positive for multiple drugs at arrest. They also started using gateway drugs, such as alcohol and marijuana, at an earlier age (15.9 and 13.5, respectively) compared to those individuals that had never been arrested as a juvenile (17.94 and 15.49, respectively) (not shown). Additionally, adults arrested as juveniles have had lengthier involvements with the criminal justice system, were more likely to report gang involvement, and had previously served time in jail and/or prison (Figure 2).

Figure 1

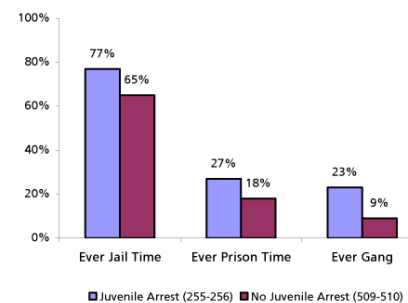
INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED AS JUVENILES HAVE MORE MENTAL HEALTH AND DRUG ABUSE ISSUES



SOURCE: SANDAG; Substance Abuse Monitoring Program, 2009.

Figure 2

ARRESTEES WITH JUVENILE RECORDS HAVE ENGAGED IN MORE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY



SOURCE: SANDAG; Substance Abuse Monitoring Program, 2009.

These data not only illustrate the link between juvenile delinquency and later involvement in the adult system, but highlight the greater level of need (e.g., drug and mental health problems) by arrestees with juvenile records. While the economic downturn has not had a noticeable impact on crime rates to date, it may eventually, as juvenile and adult prevention and rehabilitation programs are significantly reduced.

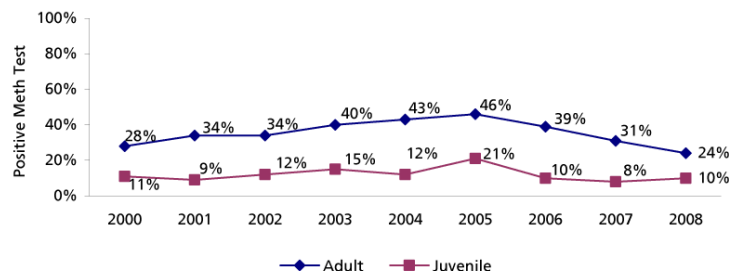
To learn more about the characteristics of recent arrestees into local detention facilities and current crime rates, visit www.sandag.org/cj to view the series of SAM bulletins and the 2009 Mid-Year Crime Bulletin.

THE UNKNOWN COST AND FUTURE OF METH USE IN THESE UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC TIMES

Two recent studies released by CASA at Columbia University¹ and RAND² highlight the costly toll substance use has had on local and national budgets. CASA conservatively estimated that in 2005, state governments spent approximately 15 percent of their budgets (19% of California's) on substance abuse and its damages, for a total of \$467.7 billion nationally. When the lens is turned on methamphetamine (meth) specifically, the costs are also staggering with the nation spending an estimated \$23.4 billion in 2005. Closer examination of these expenditures reveals that only about two percent of each of these budgets (overall and meth alone) was spent on prevention, with the majority consumed by addressing the negative consequences of drug use (e.g., loss of life, criminal justice costs).

San Diego County has a long and dubious history with meth. However, perseverance, commitment, and aggressive action on the part of the alcohol and drug treatment community, law enforcement, and policy makers have resulted in positive outcomes. Data collected through SANDAG's Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program show that meth use among arrestees (a strong indicator of meth trends) in San Diego County has been on the decline for both adults and juveniles since a peak in 2005 (21% and 46%, respectively). In 2008, 24 percent of adults and 10 percent of juveniles tested positive for meth (Figure 1)³.

Table 1
METH USE AMONG SAN DIEGO COUNTY ARRESTEES SHOWS A DOWNWARD TREND



SOURCE: SANDAG; Substance Abuse Monitoring Program 2008 data.

Rather than a cause for celebration, these data sound a warning of what lies ahead as decision makers are forced to make difficult budget-related decisions. Without a legislative mandate, prevention and intervention programs are often the first to be dismantled during tight fiscal times. Combating meth use and production requires constant vigilance. Time will reveal what impact fewer resources will have on this fight.

¹ Author (2009). *Shoveling up II: The Impact of Substance Abuse on Federal, State, and Local Budgets*. Available at www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/380-ShovelingUpII.pdf

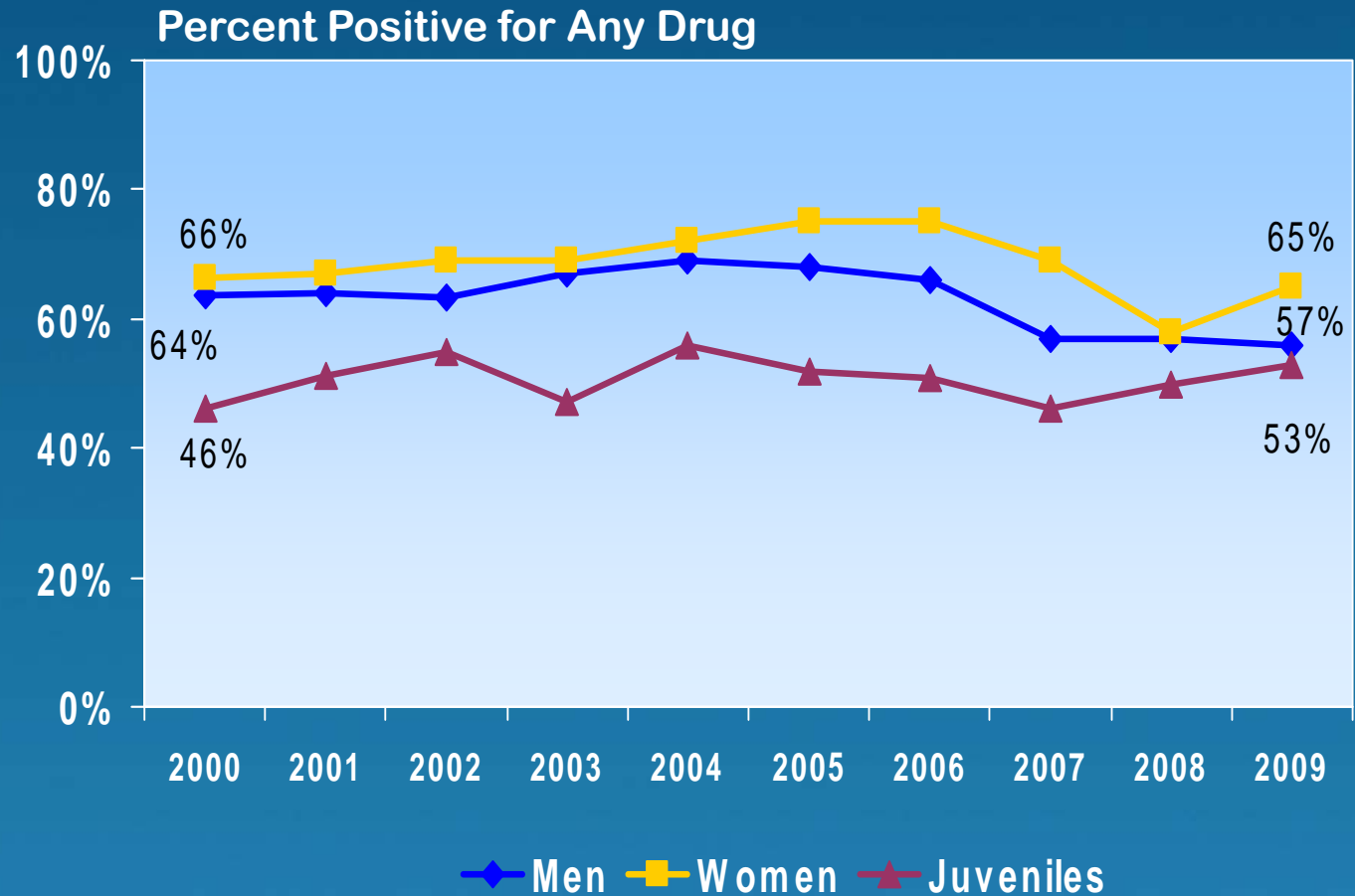
² Nicosia, N., Pacula, R., Kilmer, B., Lundberg, R., & Chiesa, J. (2009) *The Economic Costs of Methamphetamine use in the United States*. available at www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG829.pdf

³ 2008 SAM data will be available through a series of SANDAG bulletins to be released between July and August 2009.

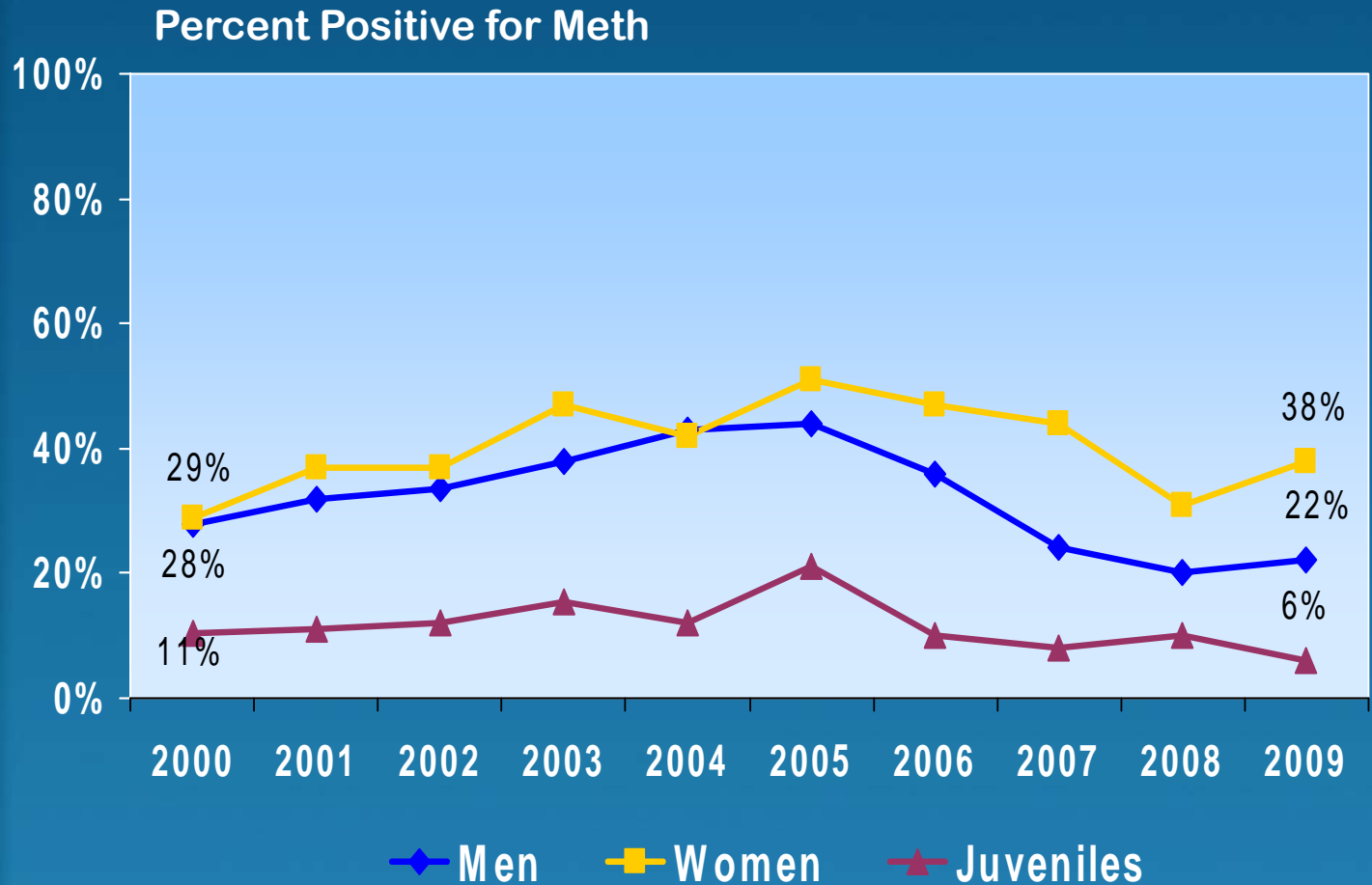
2009 Samples

- 766 adults
 - 495 males and 271 females
 - Average age 32.7 (18-69)
 - 37% arrested for drug offense
- 154 juveniles
 - 120 males and 34 females
 - Average age 15.8 (12-18)
 - 6% arrested for drug offense

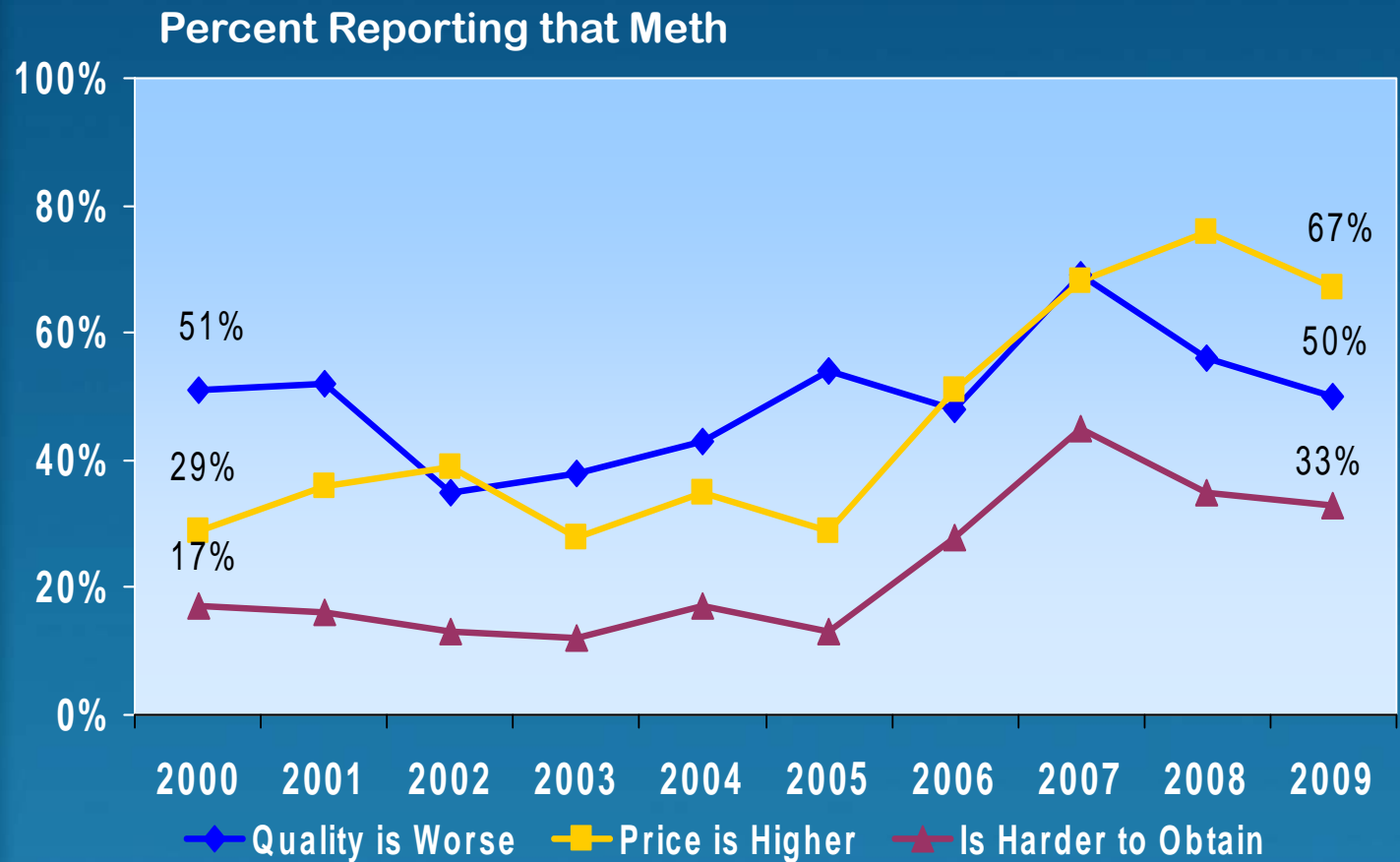
Half or More of Arrestees Test Positive for an Illicit Substance



Adult Females Most Likely to Test Positive for Meth in San Diego

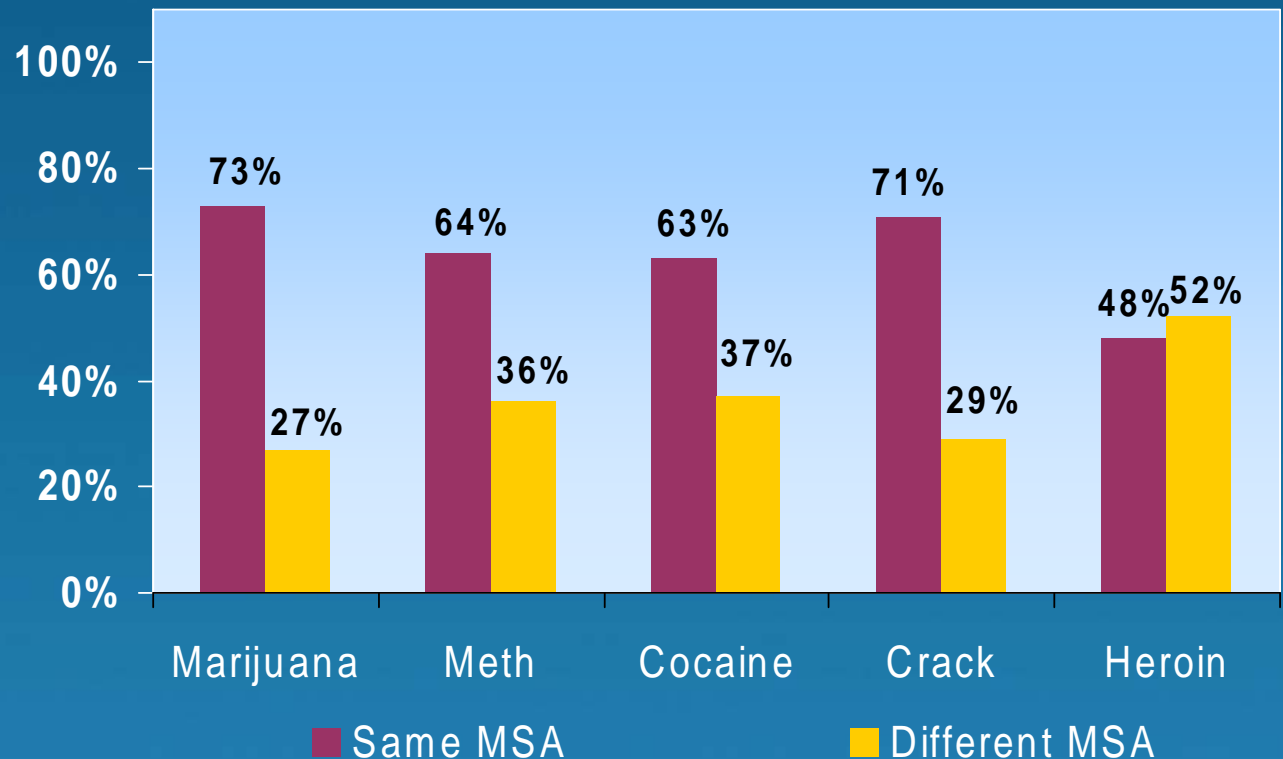


Meth Harder to Obtain and More Expensive



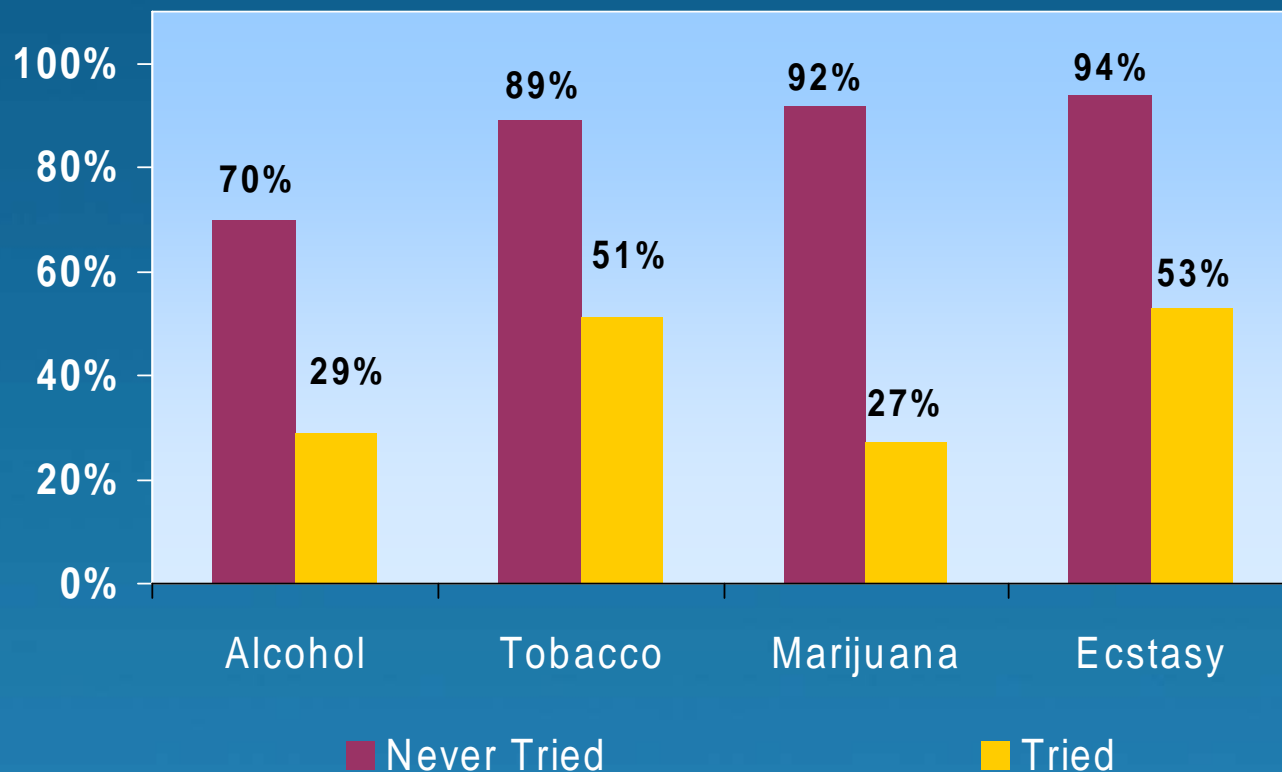
Drug Market Questions Show Where Different Drugs Are Obtained

Percent of Adults Respondents Describing Where They Obtain



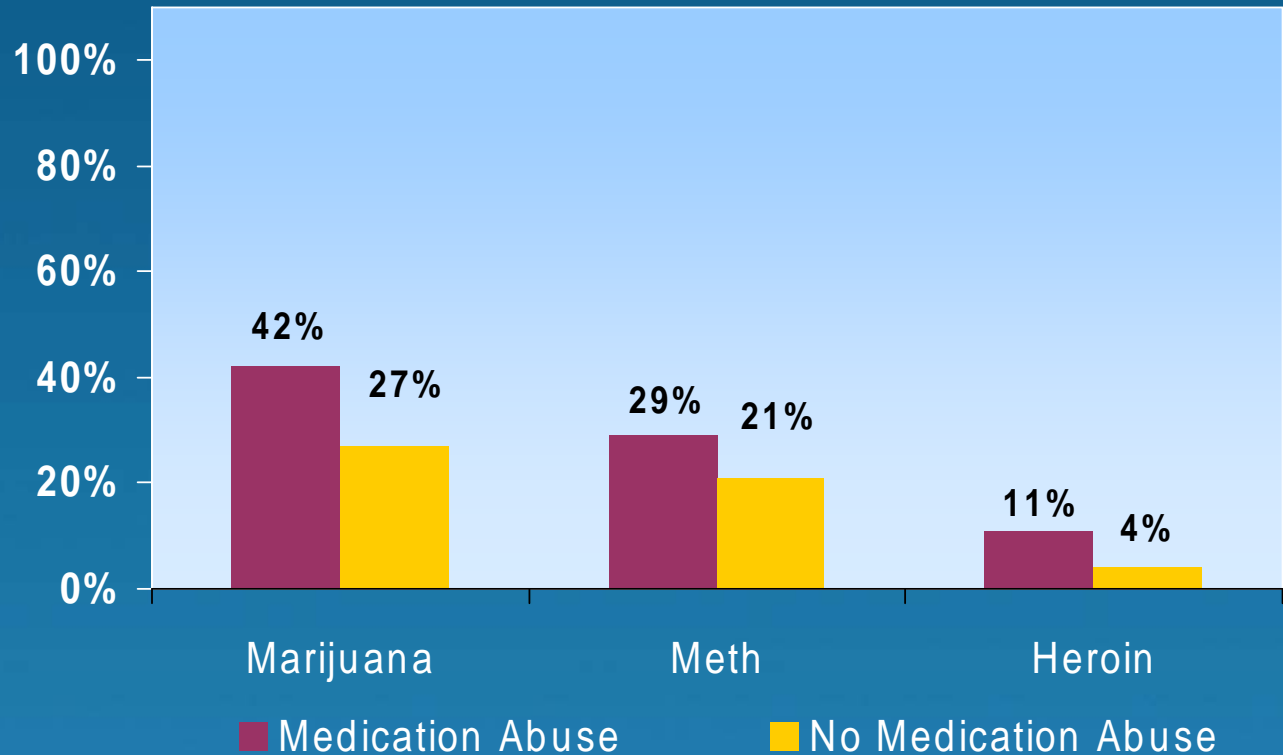
Juveniles Perceive Different Risks of Using Different Drugs

Percent Who Think Drug is Bad



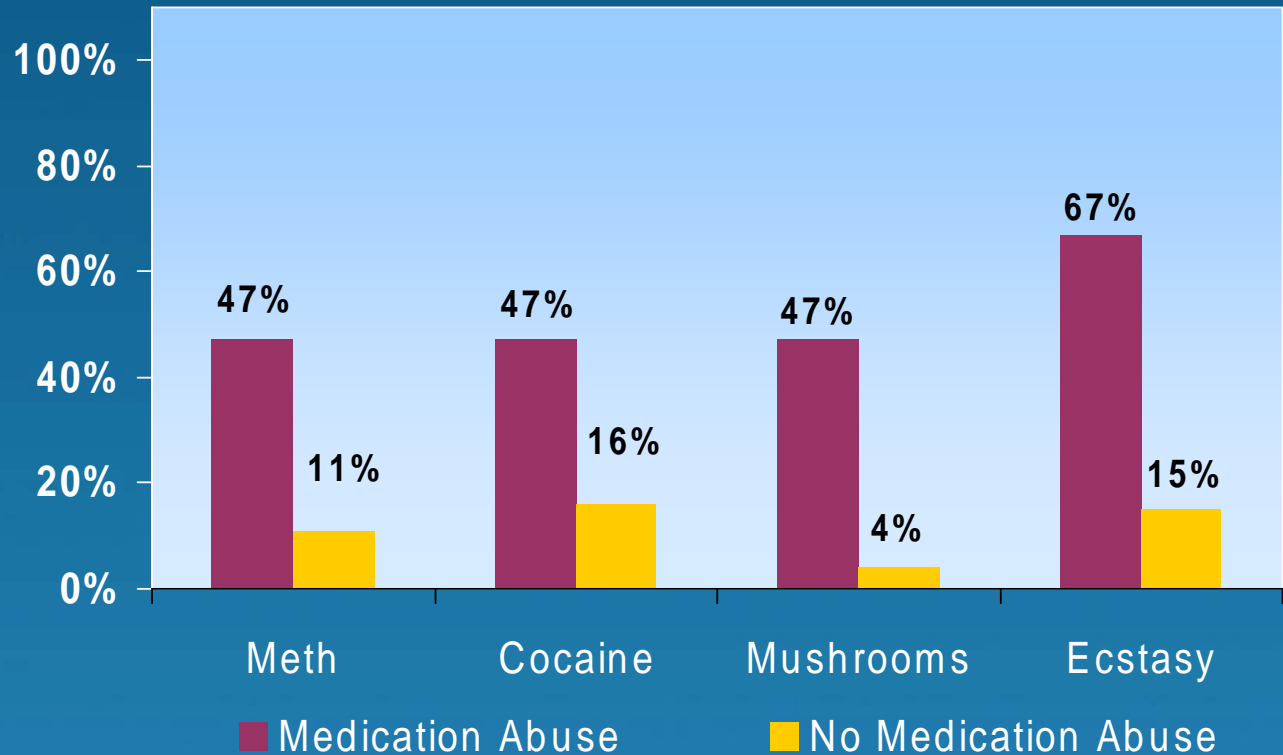
Use of Illicit Drugs and Prescription and Other Medication Related (Adults)

Percent Who Ever Used Illicit Drug



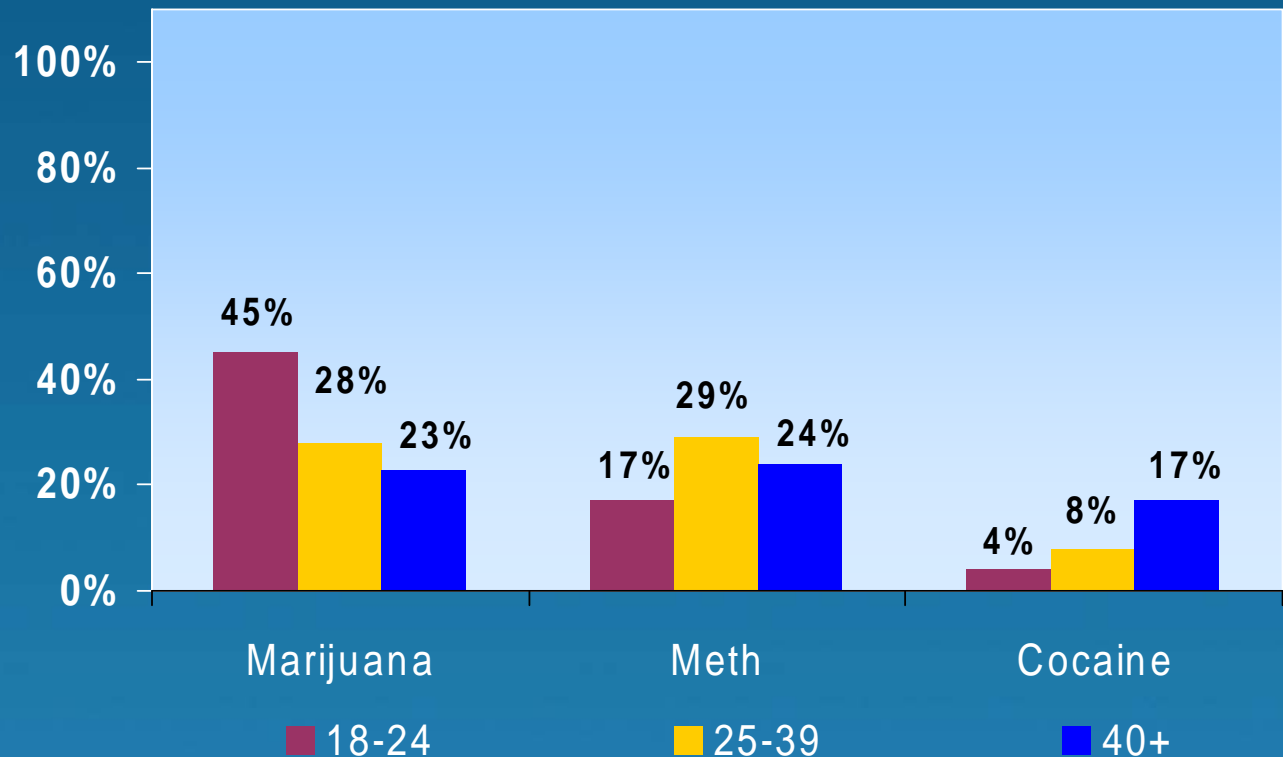
Use of Illicit Drugs and Prescription and Other Medication Related (Juv)

Percent Who Ever Used Illicit Drug



Drug Use Varies by Arrestee Characteristic, Including Age

Percent Positive by Age



Gang Involvement

- 46% of juveniles, 13% of adults reported membership or association
- 53% report family member association
- 71% say they plan on ending association eventually
- More likely to have used and sold drugs

Other Adult Statistics

- 44% ever homeless
- 39% had driver vehicle under influence in past year
- 33% had juvenile justice contact
- 30% had received treatment before
- 20% previous mental health diagnosis
- 20% visited ER for drug-related incident



Other Juvenile Statistics

- 91% report previous truancy
- 66% of females and 37% of males have run away from home
- 60% have parents who have been arrested and booked
- 46% report parental alcohol and/or other drug use
- 36% report previous family CPS contact



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